

Dear American Resident or traveling in Germany. The following updates the Avian Influenza situation in Germany.

### **Avian Flu in Germany**

Tests have confirmed the presence of the deadly H5N1 bird flu strain in ten dead swans, one hawk, and one goose in northern Germany. The birds were found on the island of Ruegen, in the Baltic Sea. The German government has declared a three kilometer (two mile) security zone and a 10 km surveillance zone around the place where the birds were discovered. No poultry may be transported into or out of the zones. It has also ordered all domestic fowl within 10 kilometers to immediately shut their livestock indoors, this requirement also applies to the rest of Germany starting Friday, February 17. These measures are intended to prevent the spread of the virus from wild birds to domestic poultry and the German government has announced a zero tolerance policy towards violators. Meanwhile, neighboring Austria as well as Iran announced they had detected the H5N1 virus in dead birds, following recent confirmation in birds in Italy, Greece, and Slovenia.

The German Minister of Health, Ulla Schmidt announced that the incidence does not increase the threat level to humans. The following precautions are recommended:

- Avoid contact with chickens, ducks or other poultry and their waste.
- Children are more prone to play with birds or to “rescue” sick animals than adults ; teach them to avoid contact with birds.
- If you see dead or sick birds, report them to the local authorities, but do not touch them.
- Do not keep birds as pets.
- Wash hands with soap and water after any contact.
- Cook all poultry and eggs thoroughly.

Check the WHO ([http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian\\_influenza/en/](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/)) or CDC (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/index.htm>) website for more information and update. Also, there is a section on Avian Influenza on the following web page: [http://www.usembassy.de/germany/services/avian\\_flu.html](http://www.usembassy.de/germany/services/avian_flu.html)

Thank you.